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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 09/748,889 | 12/27/2000 | Frederick W. Ryan JR. | F-212 | 5705 |
| 919 | 7590 | 08/11/2004 | EXAMINER | |
| PITNEY BOWES INC. 35 WATERVIEW DRIVE P.O. BOX 3000 MSC 26-22 SHELTON, CT 06484-8000 | | | SHERR, CRISTINA O | |
| | | ART UNIT | | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | 3621 | | |
| DATE MAILED: 08/11/2004 | | | | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 09/748,889 | RYAN ET AL. <i>J</i> | |
| | Examiner Cristina O Sherr | Art Unit 3621 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. This communication is in response to Applicant's Amendment filed 27 April 2004.

Claims 15 and 27 have been amended. Claims 1-31 are pending in this action.

Response to Arguments

2. The 112 rejections in this case are withdrawn, having been remedied by amendments to claim 15.

3. Applicant argues with respect to claims 1-14 and 27-30, that Moore does not discloses an incoming and outgoing mail processing center where the incoming mail processing center obtains a mail piece data and uploads it to the data center, the data center performs a verification check on the mail piece data and downloads instructions, based thereon, to the outgoing mail processing center. Attention is directed to Moore (US 5,917,925A) at col 3 ln 58-col 4 ln 20.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-14 and 27-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Moore (US5,917,925A) in view of Racanelli (4,511,793) further in view of Liechti et al (US 5,715,164A).

6. Regarding claim 1-6, 9-10 and 27-30:

Moore discloses scanning mail throughout the mail processing system in order to detect mail fraud (e.g. col 3 ln 58-col 4 ln 20).

7. Regarding claims 12-14 and 28 –

Racanelli discloses the accumulation of the amount of postage dispensed/used for a particular amount (e.g. col 1 ln 47-60).

8. Regarding claims 11-14 and 28-30 –

Liechti discloses the centralized collection of postage used data/information for a plurality of postage meters (e.g. col 1 ln 54 – col 2 ln2).

9. It would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teachings of Moore, Racanelli and Liechti in order to obtain greater efficiency in the detection of mail fraud.

10. Examiner's note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references as applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant.

Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may be applied as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant, in preparing the responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

Conclusion

11. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

12. Sansone et al (US6,064,995A) discloses metering incoming mail to detect fraudulent indicia.
13. Hunter et al (US 4,873,645) discloses a secure postage dispensing system.
14. Berson et al (US 5,819,239A) discloses a method of verifying proper payment of postage.
15. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).
16. A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.
17. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cristina O Sherr whose telephone number is 703-305-0625. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 to 5:00.
18. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Trammell can be reached on 703-305-9768. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3621

19. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

JAMES P. TRAMMELL
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600
